

Singalovāda Suttanta [D.III.p. 180-193] In English Translation

The Highway Code

For

The Good Life of the Buddhist

SINGALOVADA SUTTANTA

[English translation with notes]

Bhikkhu Professor Dhammavihari

1. Thus have I heard. Once upon a time the Exalted One [*Bhagavā*] was dwelling at Rajagaha in the Squirrels' Sanctuary of the Bamboo Grove. At that time, Singālaka the house-holder's son, rising up early in the day, left Rajagaha, and with his garments and his hair wet and hands held together in adoration, was bending down in worship towards all directions, viz., east, south, west, north, below and above.
2. At that time the Exalted One, having donned his robes in the fore-noon, took his bowl and robe and entered Rajagaha for alms. The Exalted One saw Singālaka the householder's son, who having risen up early in the day and leaving Rajagaha, with his garments and his hair wet, and hands held together in adoration, bending down in worship towards all directions, viz., east, south, west, north, below and above.

Seeing Singāla the householder's son, he said thus: Why do you O householder's son, having risen up early in the day and leaving Rajagaha, with your garments and your hair wet, and hands held together in adoration, bend down in worship towards all directions, viz., east, south, west, north, below and above.

"My father, O Sir, as he lay dying, told me thus: ' You shall pay respect to the directions '. Thus, O Sir, respecting, honouring, revering and holding in high esteem the words of my father, I, having risen up early in the day and leaving Rajagaha, with my garments and my hair wet, and hands held together in adoration, bend down in worship towards all directions, viz., east, south, west, north, below and above."

O Householder's son, in the Noble Tradition of the Buddhist Order [*Ariyassa vinaye*], the six directions are not to be worshipped in this manner.

Well then, Sir, in what manner are the six directions to be worshipped in the Noble Tradition of the Buddhist Order [*Ariyassa vinaye*]?

Then, O Householder's son, listen to me and reflect carefully on what I say. I shall speak to you.

Very well indeed, Lord. Thus replied Singāla, the householder's son to the Exalted One.

The Exalted One spoke thus.

3. For the reason that an ariyan disciple [*ariya-sāvako*] has totally eliminated the four defiling traits of activity [*kamma-kilesā*], and does not commit any evil deed through any of the four avenues [*catūhi thānehī*], does not resort to any of the six wasteful outlets which drain away one's resources [*bhogānaṃ apāya-mukhāni*], such a person thus moved away from the fourteen evil ways [*cuddasa-pāpakā*], encompasses the six directions. He is well set for the victory of both worlds [*ubho-loka-vijayāya paṭipanno*]. He has made a success of [*āradho hotī*] this world as well as of the world beyond. After death, he would be born in a blissful heavenly world [*sugatim saggaṃ lokam*].

Which are the four defiling traits of activity [*kamma-kilesā*] which he [an ariyan disciple or *ariya-sāvako*] has totally eliminated?

Destruction of life [*pāṇātipāto*] O Householder's son, is a defiling traits of activity. Theft [*adinnādānam*] is a defiling trait of activity. Impropropriety of sex relationships [*kāmesu micchā'cāro*] is a defiling trait of activity. Dishonesty in speech [*musāvādo*] is a defiling trait of activity. These four defiling traits of activity [*kamma-kilesā*] he has totally eliminated. This the Exalted One declared.

4. Having said this, the Well Gone One [*Sugato*], the Master [*Satthā*] stated further.

Destruction of life and theft,
And whatever is dishonesty in speech,
And adulterous behaviour of men and women.
The wise never speak in praise of these.*

* **Notes** One would obviously note here the absence of the fifth precept of the *pañcasīla*, namely the one that refers to the intake of alcohol and drugs. Buddhist texts are by no means making any concessions to any one here. The classification here has a different specification. The evils of taking intoxicants [*surāmerayapāne ādīnava*] are dealt with in detail elsewhere in the sutta. We shall discuss them in due course.

5. Which are the four avenues through which he [i.e. an ariyan disciple or *ariya-sāvako*] does not commit any evil deed? Slipping into error through excessive desire [*chandāgatim*], one commits an evil deed. Slipping into error through excessive dislike [*dosāgatim*], one commits an evil deed. Slipping into error through excessive delusion [*mohāgatim*] one commits an evil deed. Slipping into error through fear [*bhayāgatim*] one commits an evil deed. For the reason, O Householder's son, that an ariyan disciple [or *ariya-sāvako*] never slips into error through excessive desire [*chandāgatim*], never slips into error through excessive dislike [*dosāgatim*], never slips into error through excessive delusion [*mohāgatim*] never

slipping into error through fear [*bhayāgatim*], he does not, through these four avenues, commit any evil deed.

This the Exalted One declared.

6. Having said this, the Well Gone One [*Sugato*], the Master [*Satthā*] stated further.

He who through desire, dislike, fear or delusion
Does overstep the law of righteousness.

His fame and glory do fade away
Like in the dark-half, the waning moon.

He who through desire, dislike, fear or delusion
Does never overstep the law of righteousness.

His fame and glory to greater heights rise
Like in the bright -half, the waxing moon.

7. Which are the six wasteful outlets which drain away one's resources [*bhogānaṃ apāya-mukhāni*] that he [an ariyan disciple or *ariya-sāvako*] does not resort to? O Householder's son, indulgence is a wasteful outlet which drains away one's resources [*bhogānaṃ apāya-mukhaṃ*]. Being on the streets at improper times [*vikāle visikhā-cariyānuyoga*] is a wasteful outlet which drains away one's resources [*bhogānaṃ apāya-mukhaṃ*]. Frequenting festivals [*samajjhābhicaraṇaṃ*] is a wasteful outlet which drains away one's resources [*bhogānaṃ apāya-mukhaṃ*]. Resorting to places of gambling [*jūta-pamādatthānānuyoga*] is a wasteful outlet which drains away one's resources [*bhogānaṃ apāya-mukhaṃ*]. Being in the company of evil friends [*pāpa-mittānuyoga*] is a wasteful outlet which drains away one's resources [*bhogānaṃ apāya-mukhaṃ*]. Being steeped in laziness [*ālassānuyoga*] is a wasteful outlet which drains away one's resources [*bhogānaṃ apāya-mukhaṃ*].

8. O Householder's son, these are these six evil consequences of being

indulgent in situations of slackness and neglect [*pamādaṭṭhānānuyoga*] resulting from intoxication through alcohol and drugs [*surā-meraya-majja*]. They are: loss of wealth in this very life [*sandiṭṭhikā dhanajānī*], leading to increase of quarrels [*kalaha-ppavaḍḍhanī*], developing proneness to illnesses [*rogānaṃ āyatanam*], generating ill-fame [*akitti-sañjananī*], rendering one naked in public [*kopīna-niddaṃsanī*], and finally weakening one's intellect [*paññāya dubbālī-karaṇī*] taking the sixth place [*chaṭṭhamam padam bhavati*]. These O Householder's son, are the evil consequences of being indulgent in situations of slackness and neglect resulting from intoxication through alcohol and drugs.*

* **Note** This detailed and thorough analysis of the societal and physiological deterioration that can come upon humans, both man and women, through the use of alcohol which these Buddhist texts of more than twenty-five centuries ago reveal, certainly brings great credit to Buddhist thinking in relation to their concern for social well-being. About 2nd century A.D. this information appear to have been well received in a land like Afghanistan where Buddhism was flourishing by that time. Stone carvings at Hadda, now preserved in Muse Guimet in Paris and in museums in Alahabad in Pakistan, bear testimony to this. They unanimously pick up the theme **rendering one naked in public**. What a delightful sermon in stone! See Gandhara Art As for **developing proneness to illnesses** which is listed here, we would like to add that many developed countries like the U.S.A. have published valuable statistics relating to alcohol related incidents of hospitalization in their countries. The U.S.A. particularly revealed that in 199 these included something like forty-nine and forty-three percent respectively for men and women.

9. O Householder's son, these are the six evil consequences of being on the streets at improper times [*vikāle visikhā-cariyānuyoga*]. They are: His own self is unguarded [*agutto*] and unprotected [*arakkhito*]. His wife and children are unguarded [*agutto*] and unprotected [*arakkhito*]. His possessions are unguarded [*aguttam*] and unprotected [*arakkhitam*]. He comes to be suspected of evil doings [*saṃkiyo ca hoti pāpakesu thānesu*].

False allegations would be levelled at him [*abhutaṃ vacanañ ca tasmim rūhati*]. Many painful situations would come his way [*bahunnañ ca dukkha-dhammānaṃ purakkhato hoti*]. These, O Householder's son, are the six evil consequences of being on the streets at improper times.

10. O Householder's son, these are the six evil consequences of frequenting festivals [*samajjhābhicaraṇaṃ*]. They are: [One would be inquiring all the time as to] "Where is dancing, where is singing, where is orchestration, where is story-telling, where is hand-music [*pāṇissaraṃ*], where is drumming [*kumbhathūnaṃ*]" These, O Householder's son, are the six evil consequences of frequenting festivals.
11. O Householder's son, these are the six evil consequences of resorting to places of gambling [*jūta-pamādaṭṭhānānuyoga*]. They are: Winning at gambling [*ayaṃ*] generates enmity. One who has suffered loss [*jito*. Not *jino* as in PTS] grieves over the money [*vittaṃ*. Not *cittaṃ* as in PTS]. Loss of wealth here and now [*sandiṭṭhikā dhanajān*]. One's word would not be accepted in society [*sabhā-gatassa vacanam na rūhati*]. One would be despised by friends and associates [*mittāmaccānaṃ paribhūto hoti*]. He would not be acceptable [*apatthito*] to those who seek marriage alliances [*āvāha-vivāhakānaṃ*]. For they would say 'A person who is addicted to gambling is incapable of supporting a wife [*nālam dārabharanāya*]. These, O Householder's son, are the six evil consequences of resorting to places of gambling.
12. O Householder's son, these are the six evil consequences of being in the company of evil friends [*pāpa-mittānuyoga*]. They are: Whoever there be who are evil-minded persons, drunkards, addicts to alcohol, frauds and cheats, they are his friends, they are his associates.

These, O Householder's son, are the six evil consequences of being in the company of evil friends.

13. O Householder's son, these are the six evil consequences of being steeped in laziness [*ālassānuyoga*]. They are: Complaining of severe cold, he does not engage himself in work. Complaining of severe heat, he does not engage himself in work. Complaining that it is late in the day, he does not engage himself in work. Complaining that it is too early in the day, he does not engage himself in work. Complaining that he is very hungry, he does not engage himself in work. Complaining that he is over-fed [*atī-dhāto*], he does not engage himself in work. Such a person who is too full of excuses or pretexts for not working, shall find that he would not get anew any assets which are not already in his possession. Assets which are already in his possession shall diminish. These, O Householder's son, are the six evil consequences of being steeped in laziness.

This the Exalted One declared.

14. Having said this, the Well Gone One [*Sugato*], the Master [*Satthā*] stated further.

Some are only friends of the drinking place
 Charming only in their friendly words.
 Those who befriend you in times of need,
 They alone are true friends.
 Sleeping till late, resorting to others' spouses,
 Intense in enmity and to wickedness inclined,
 Evil friends with sever miserliness,
 These six situations drag a man to destruction.